

Admiral Turner's Address to the MIT Club  
of Washington - 8 February 1978

That's what you get when you hire a public affairs officer who is a born exaggerator. I hope you enjoyed the film clip that Herb and his people put together for you. It was to have been for our famous tours. We've had to back off on that one a little bit. Though we will use it with touring groups who will come out here from time to time. But we won't have public tours as we had hoped.

But the fact that we made a stab at public tours some months ago--and the press got out ahead of us we really weren't committed to it when they said we were--we made an experimentation. We had families come out here and try it and the mechanics of it really were a little bit beyond us. But the fact that we tried it was indicative of a firm conviction on our part today that it is important for the American public to know more about the Central Intelligence Agency--about the intelligence organization and operation in its country. That's why I am delighted that you've been good enough to take your monthly meeting and come out here and be with us. I'd like to briefly, I hope, try to tell you a little about the changes that are going on in the Intelligence Community in general and then open up to your questions and try to get to your specific questions and considerations or suggestions you may have for us.

To begin with, I'm pleased that you're interested to come out here because it is important that we all understand what's going on in our Intelligence Community, because the intelligence product for this country is today, in my opinion, more important than it has been since this Agency was founded 30 years ago. Why? Well look at the kinds of things we traditionally do. We collect first, military intelligence and look at the change today in the importance of military intelligence and say 30 years ago when this Agency did start. Thirty years ago we were the dominant military power in the world. There was no one that could really consider taking us on in any military combat. Since then the Soviet Union, not having been able to compete with us in the economic and the political spheres, have resorted to that one area of competition where they could and that was the military sphere. They've put extraordinary effort into that and today, however you measure it, there is something like military equality. That is, our forces are different qualitatively, quantitatively but they are each of such a nature that neither one of the major powers could consider going to war with the other one without recognizing that it would entail a very substantial risk. Now ask yourself in this situation of near military parity how much more important is good intelligence? Isn't good intelligence what gives leverage to our policy makers? If you're a military policy maker and you know something about what the enemy's forces are and what his intentions may be, you can use, deploy or build your forces in a

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better way. If you're a SALT negotiator, a diplomat and you understand what the enemy's strategic forces are and how he may intend to apply them, you have a better insight for making your judgments and for doing your negotiating. And when you are close to military parity, the failure of intelligence, the failure to tell you that the other side is making some peacetime military move that may open that distance so you no longer have parity, is certainly much more risky, much more destabilizing to the world than it would be when there is all ready a big advantage there, such as we had at the end of World War II. So we must be able to tell our military policy makers roughly what's going on in the Soviet Union and the other principle countries of the world in order to ensure that we don't let that kind of risk, that kind of gap, develop.

Quickly in the political sphere it's very much the same. Thirty years ago we were the dominant political power. Most, or many at least, of the smaller nations of the world followed our lead, followed our example and in many cases felt that they had to. Today we all know that the smallest nation no matter what its gross national product or its military power hews to an independent course and none of them want to be bullied or pushed around by either of the super powers. In this kind of atmosphere if we're going to play the role in the world that is ours; if we're going to be the stabilizing force in the world; if we're going to be the ones who stand for freedom for the individual, we have to understand how to work with these other countries in a collaborative way not because we have so much advantage over them as perhaps we did.

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That means having intelligence about what they're doing. What their attitudes, their cultures, their problems, their economics are. It's more important today in this situation of cooperation than it was in a period of dominance. Similarly in the economics sphere. Today if the Soviet Union, the Japanese or the European Economic Community in particular, take dramatic unexpected economic actions it affects you, it affects me, it affects our country and our pocketbooks. You remember the great grain robbery of 1973 when the Soviets entered the grain market unexpectedly and changed the whole price structure. That kind of thing we have got to have good economic intelligence about. We've got to be able to warn our policy makers of what's going on in the economic sphere or we're going to lose our shirt.

Again, so much more important than when we were totally independent economically 25 or 30 years ago. Today, we are in this interdependent mesh.

Now in addition to this increasing importance of intelligence, there is one other important factor that shapes our attitudes in the Intelligence Community today. Since the end of 1974 until just recently there has been intense criticism of our intelligence operations in the media of this country. Some of it justified, a lot of it not. But that critical atmosphere has been there and out of it today I believe that we are now coming around to recognizing that we must in addition to being critical, where criticism is due, we must be constructive. And what we are constructively looking for is the way in which we can have good intelligence within the

standards, within the moves of our democratic society while protecting the established rights of our citizens. So out of these two trends, increased importance and more emphasis on how we do our intelligence to keep it within the bounds of our societal requirements, are shaping the intelligence operations of your country remarkably today. And I would like to point out four areas in which we are changing.

The first is our product. When we went into business in September of 1947, the first time this country had a peacetime centralized intelligence organization--which is just not the Central Intelligence Agency but the entire Intelligence Community, part of which is resident in the Department of Defense, part in the Department of State, part in the Department of Treasury, Energy, FBI and so on. Way back then we had one primary product and that was information about what was going on in the Soviet Union--primarily what was going on militarily. We were probably interested too in some of the boarder states under the Soviet domination in Eastern Europe and we were, of course, interested from time to time in various states in the Third World where the Soviets were making a foray, trying to establish a position. But basically our product in those days were determined by what the Soviets were up to and where.

And there was one other characteristic to the product. When the Soviets did make an attempt to go out and establish a foothold in some other country, some non-Communist country, this country called upon the Central Intelligence Agency in particular not only to provide intelligence information about it but to try

to do something about it; to try to influence the political events in other countries. We were there in Iran in 1953, when the government changed from communist to friendly. We were there similarly in Guatemala in 1954. We were there, as you well know, in Cuba from 1961 onward for many years. We were there in Vietnam throughout that experience. And we were there as recently as 1975 trying to shape the political outcome in Angola until the Congress of this country said no, stop. Now look at how this kind of a single focus product with a high political action emphasis has changed in the last 20 to 30 years. Today this country has legitimate needs for good intelligence in a large number of the 150 some countries around the world. And we not only are interested in those countries in military intelligence, in many of them, in most of them, we're much more interested in economic or political intelligence for the reasons I cited earlier.

And so today we cannot be content with knowing what is going on in 8 to 10 or a dozen countries around the world, we've got to be much broader in our geographical scope. We've got to be much deeper in our topical scope. And on top of that, as you well appreciate and as the Angola example I cited brings out, this country is much less interested today in political action than it was in the years past. I think that is quite proper. Though I would not want to leave the impression I think we should eschew political action as a tool as an implement of our government policy. I think we must have it available. But I predict that we will use it much more judiciously, and we will use it under much tighter controls than ever before. And I will come back to those

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in a bit.

So our product today, as contrasted with the beginning, is primarily intelligence information, economic, political and military over a wide range of countries and with much less emphasis on political action.

A second change that we're effecting is in our production line, or how we go about doing our intelligence work. The production line of intelligence, at least of collection intelligence, of gaining the information that you need, has traditionally relied primarily on the human intelligence agent on the spy. You remember in Jericho how Josuha sent two spies into the city before he marched around with his trumpets. Well, the human spy was important then and has been important ever since. But in the last decade, decade and a half, there has been a revolution in this production line. There's been new machinery coming into being and it's called technical intelligence collection devices. The ability of these new technical intelligence collection devices to gain great quantities of information is just burgeoning. It is difficult to describe how much more information we can collect today through these technical means than we could 2, 3, 4 years ago. The interesting point, however, is that generally speaking technical intelligence collection tells you what happened yesterday, or maybe today, in some other country and as soon as I tell something about that to a policy maker in our government he looks at me and he says, Stan, why did they do that? Or what are they going to do tomorrow if that's what they did yesterday. And

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that as you could well appreciate is the forte of the human intelligence agent, of the spy--to find out what people are thinking, planning, what their intentions are. So today, as this greater vast quantity of data pours in from the technical collection systems, we must complement it with the human intelligence factor. The demand for the human intelligence goes up in proportion as the quantity of technical intelligence comes in. I said the production line had changed and it really has because not only do we have these new systems but we've changed from a single machine production line to a well integrated, well oiled, well meshed set of machinery, various types of technical collection and the human collection and they must be brought together in a complementarity. It's a change in style, it's a change that requires new attitudes, new skills, new kinds of people.

Now on top of all this, as a result very largely of the criticism I've mentioned, we have a third major adaptation of our procedures in intelligence and that's greater openness. Now there are a lot of risks in this and it's a difficult adjustment for us to make, because intelligence has traditionally operated in maximum secrecy and much, of course, of what we do simply can not be done if it is not done in secret. But today, I believe, the Intelligence Community of our country has no choice but to be more open. There are risks in this particularly when you see how the KGB operates against us. But there are also gains. There are also strengths to be had from operating more openly. For instance, back to the three years of criticism. I think that

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the American public was not able to stand up and support the Intelligence Community when it did, in some instances of course, deserve support, because it simply had no basis, no foundation of knowledge about what the Community did and how it did it. The Intelligence Community had not taken the time to attempt to educate, to inform the American public about what it was doing and it needed that support and often deserved it. Let me emphasize here, so I don't get misconstrued. I have no allusions about our going totally public and telling everybody everything about what we do. But basically we do two fundamental things in intelligence. I've emphasized that we collect all this information by these various technical and human means. But in addition we then must do something with that. We must analyze it.

We must do what they do at your old alma mater--research. We must take those clues, piece them together and come up with an evaluation or an estimate of what it means. Now, we cannot tell the public very much about this side of the operation, because if we tell you the details of how we collect our intelligence, who a spy is for instance, you can see what will happen. Tomorrow you won't be able to use that form of collecting intelligence. It's as simple as that. Countermeasures can be developed for the technical systems and spies of course will be caught. So we have to be tight on that side. But when it comes to talking about what we have learned and evaluated from that, we frequently can be more open. So today when we do an estimate we look at it. We look at the cover and we say, it says on here, Top Secret, or Secret, or Destroy before Reading--whatever it may be. Then we

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try to say, if we took out of this those things which must remain secret so they don't disclose how we got that information or they don't disclose some fact of great uniqueness to our policy makers that it's valuable for them to have and nobody else knows they have, will what's left be of value to the public. And if it is we publish it. We have averaged about two unclassified important analyses we have published a week for this past year. You may have read about the one last March on the world energy prospects. It simply said we do not think the world is going to be able to get out of the ground, in the next seven or eight years, as much oil as it's going to want to consume on the top of the ground. We didn't say the world was running dry of oil or the reserves are running out or anything like that. We just said that our ability to pump it out--because we can predict today pretty much how many wells are going to be pumping by 1985 or so--won't match the demand. We put out another study in the spring which talked about the world steel market. It simply said, look nobody's operating at much more than 75% of capacity and there are a lot of nations still bringing steel capacity on the line and we don't see any trend to make it likely that the demand is going to catch up with existing capacity; let alone the expanding capacity.

We put out one on international terrorism. Which pointed out the incidents of international terrorism involving US persons or firms has increased in the last several years from about 40% to 60%--a dismal prospect for us and our country's interest.

We put out a study last summer about the Soviet economy. We simply said, the prospects today for that economy are more bleak

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than at any time since the death of Stalin. And this has real implications for us. It means, for instance, that the Soviets will not find it easy to obtain the foreign currency, the hard currency that they want to buy the machinery, manufactured goods, the technology from us and the rest of the West, that we think they would like to do. The market for our sales to the Soviet Union will not be as good as some people might think or hope.

We hope that these studies as we produce them and publish them are informative but we also hope they are helping to improve the quality of debate in our society on key issues like these. We certainly don't pretend we're always right. What we're trying to do is put out the best hypothesis we can, the best estimate we can, and we gain a great deal from doing it, because we gain a feedback from people who criticize and comment on these studies and we're very receptive to their views. We've called them in sometimes and had conferences as a result of their criticisms and it then helps us to sharpen our focus on what we're going to look for next to see whether the trends are going as we suggested or whether they're going some other way. Again, I would emphasize that we still have to keep secrets. We cannot publish everything we analyze. But in fact, one of the methods madness in doing more publication is that I think it will help us keep the secrets better.

You see one of the problems today in keeping secrets in our government, is too much is secret, too much is classified and therefore, there is a lack of respect for it. When you see that destroy before reading symbol you don't pay any attention to it any more because it's so frequent. So by cutting down, through

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publishing in a nonclassified version much of the information presently classified, I hope that we will garner greater respect for that which remains and must remain classified. And let me just say in passing that I believe there is a serious lack of respect for classified information in our country today. When individuals like Ellsberg or this recent man Snepp, who wrote a book on the CIA, feel that they can take it upon themselves to decide what should be classified and what should be open to the public, I think we're in trouble. The logical extension of granting each of them that privilege is that anyone of us should be entitled to decide what the public should know and what it should not know and there are 215 million of us and that's nothing short of chaos. I sincerely believe that we are far enough from Watergate now, and we've all learned enough from Watergate, that we must begin to replace some of that trust that has to exist in the elected and the appointed officials of your country. Until their proven wrong, at least, put that trust in them and not accept the Ellsbergs and the Snepps as the arbitrator of how the government should run its security policies.

Fourth, we are also making a change towards what I would call greater oversight. I'm not asking you to put your faith in the elected and appointed officials only. I'm suggesting that out of this crucible of criticism over the last three years has come a new set of checks and balances. A new set of oversight procedures. Keeping the needs for a high degree of secrecy in mind, clearly we cannot have what you would call full public oversight. But what we have instead in my view is surrogate

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public oversight. And the surrogates for the public are the President, the Vice President, the National Security Council. They are all, I assure you, very intimately involved in overseeing the intelligence process. Also the Intelligence Oversight Board, a three man board of distinguished citizens appointed by the President to look over how we're doing things with regard to legality and propriety and to report only to the President, not to me. People can report to them what they think are my sins of commission and don't have to go through me, through any chain of command and it is a very useful, very important body. But also, and most importantly, on top of that in the last two years the Congress has created two committees, one in each chamber, to do oversight of intelligence. And today we are reporting more and more forthrightly to these committees than has ever been done before.

This is not without its risks and without its dangers--this whole oversight process. But it too, has significant strengths. It has the strength that I gain some outside viewing of the risks that we must take from time to time, a different perspective on them. It gains the strength that it keeps us, while reporting to these committees of the Congress in particular, from getting too far apart from American public opinion and it in some sense shares the risks that we take. Clearly there are dangers. There are dangers that if you have too much oversight we'll end up with intelligence by timidity. We'll be afraid to do risky things that we must do. There are dangers that if there are too many people involved in the oversight we will have leaks. And we will not be

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able to conduct reasonable intelligence operations because they will become public in advance. I think we are going to find the right middle ground between these risks and these strengths. And one of the things that it is going to help us do this is the new Executive Order which the President signed two weeks ago yesterday, which Herb mentioned, and this order embodies these four directions that I have mentioned to you that intelligence is moving in today.

First, the order has a section which tries to ensure that the product will be useful to the people who are going to use it; that it will be the product suited to the 1970's and 1980's and not that suited to the 1940's. It establishes a committee of which I happen to be the chairman. The Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense and Treasury and National Security Council Advisory to the President are members and their job is to give me my marching orders, my guidance, my priorities. I'm not a consumer of intelligence, I'm the producer of intelligence. I need to know what the consumers want and require if we're to provide them good service.

Secondly, the new Presidential order tries to ensure that the production line will be a well oiled piece of machinery. It does so by concentrating a little more authority in my hands as the coordinator of the Intelligence Community, particularly on this collection side. You know I have two jobs, I'm the head of the Central Intelligence Agency but I'm also the Director of Central Intelligence. In the latter capacity, it is my job to bring together all those diverse agencies I mentioned at the beginning

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and make sure they work as one team. The new order gives me more authority to do that. But it does not impinge on the analytic side of the house particularly. I say that with emphasis because you want an independent analytic agency in the Defense Department and another substantial one in the State Department and smaller ones in the Treasury, the FBI and so on. Why, because the last thing any of us in intelligence could ever believe is that the intelligence information or data tells you the answer. It's the interpretation that counts and there are always differing interpretations, and you're never right or wrong. You're as approximate to right as you can get and mainly you're trying to tell the decision maker why you think that's the right answer because he can then apply his judgment to it. So I want, and this Executive Order preserves, independent analysis in these various agencies so that the divergent opinions will come forward.

Finally, the Executive Order tries to ensure that we do conduct our intelligence with all respect to the rights of the American citizen. It does so by entering the Attorney General into the process whenever American citizens might become involved. We're a foreign intelligence operation but you cannot help at times running into the activities overseas of American citizens and here the Attorney General sets up the guidelines, the rules, for how we will operate under such circumstances. And I think these will be very helpful and reassuring to everybody. In a few days, maybe tomorrow even, the Congress will issue its first draft of what are known as

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Those charters will build on the procedures that I've mentioned. They will build on the Executive Order that the President has just signed, and they will put into law some of these provisions, some of them don't need to be--they will make other provisions in law that are not already in the Executive Order for our established procedures. When that process is completed, some months ahead, we will then have these three foundations--our new procedures, an Executive Order, and a law to govern the operation of this entire Intelligence Community.

I believe it will on the one hand strengthen our ability to do our job well and on the other hand ensure that we're doing it in accordance with the democratic standards of our society. I believe that we are today the number one intelligence agency in the world and I believe that these new procedures will help us ensure that we stay there. I can assure you, personally, that I intend to keep it that way.

Thank you.

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MIT Club Questions & Answers - 8 February 1978

Q: You mentioned the importance of oversight. I would like to know when you brought up Daniel Ellsberg and I came up in a time when Daniel Ellsberg to me a sort of hero. My question is, when the politicians who have oversight over the intelligence of this country decide to make something like the bombing of Cambodia for example a secret, it is only a secret from the American people not from the Cambodians obviously. What safeguard do we have that the people will have the information essential to them to make the appropriate political decisions so that something which they don't feel they want to support will not continue to be supported because it's kept secret?

A: Well that's a very key question. There is such a diversity of oversight today between the Oversight Board, between the people in the Executive Branch like the President, and then two committees of the Congress representing both political parties, representing a wide spread of the country. I think it is going to be much more difficult for there to be sort of a mass collusion to keep the American public in the dark. But let me emphasize at the same time, in peace and in war this country has to do things that have to be kept from the American public. You can't do them if they're made public. Of course, the Cambodia bombing was not an intelligence thing but your analogy is perfectly good. But what I am saying to you is that if we have an intelligence operation that must be kept secretive in order to do it. No, there's no way the American public can pass judgment on that and say, no, you shouldn't be doing that. But you have now a very established set of procedures so that your representatives both elected to the Executive Branch and to the Congress will be reviewing that and presumably are reasonably in touch with the American people. And, you know we are a wonderful, open, free people and we like to have everything decided by everybody like the old New England town meeting. The world isn't that simple today and some of these things, in peace and in war, must be entrusted to somebody in our government. What we have done, I believe, is expand that oversight to ensure that there isn't a cabal, a collusion, against the American public. That there are enough people who are in touch with that public who are aware of these sensitive operations to blow the whistle if it really is not in tune with what the people of the country want. It is a very fine line.

Q: I happen to believe that there have been a number of failures of intelligence not necessarily of wrong policy, but of cold blooded professional gathering of information. There are probably others who share this opinion in certain cases. The Vietnam case where the situation was not portrayed objectively as to the feeling of the people, which is a substantial thing to know when you are fighting a war. The case of the dictatorial regime in Greece which had very little support. The coup in Cyprus which I think has distinct flavors of intelligence, where the intelligence conveyed was more attuned to what people wanted to hear or wanted to avoid, rather than pieces of information that the decision makers should have whether good or bad. Another recent thing of failure perhaps in my estimation, with regards to the energy report about the Soviet Union becoming a net importer of energy. I happen to be in the energy field and I'm puzzled by the conclusion of the CIA that the Soviet Union with vast resources of gas, liquid and solid resources of energy, will become in the years ahead a net importer of energy. It seems to me that some of the intelligence influence comes from the fact that the Soviet Union gets some oil from Iran. Iran and the Soviet Union have agreements where Iran gets some manufactured goods and takes back the two things Iran has to export namely rugs and oil. And there are only so many rugs that you can get! So they get some oil. I wonder if you have any problems regarding the information that the CIA supplies.

A: Two good points and on the first one, there is no question that objectivity in your intelligence has got to be one of your foremost points. It is why I emphasized a minute ago that we are trying to encourage differing views to come forward so that if there is a mis-analysis of the political situation in some country, that hopefully one or another of these analytic organizations the Defense Intelligence Agency, the State Department's Bureau of Research or the CIA will highlight that even as a minority view in a study or an estimate. And we are very anxious that minority views be expressed and I might parenthetically say that I've established a policy that minority views will not be put in footnotes any more. If their worth putting in they get up in the text along side the majority views so you can compare them right there with each other and so that people like myself who never read the footnotes anyway have to read the dissenting view.

On the second point. To begin with, we gave the impression incorrectly in our report that we thought the Soviet Union was going to import oil. We don't really mean that. What we meant and should have said more clearly is we believe the Soviets will not be able from their own resources to obtain as much oil as they will have a demand in their country to use and therefore, there will be pressure on them to import oil of about 4 million barrels a day over what they will be producing. And, they may import it; they may have conservation; they may stop exporting oil to the Eastern European satellites and to the West. They may take a number of courses of action to avoid importing and it will be very difficult for them to import because they won't have the hard currency to do it. So you're right we should not say they will be net importers. They will have pressures to be importers, despite their gas, coal and other resources simply because we believe that between now and 1985--and that's as far as we looked--they will not be able to bring enough of those other resources or enough new oil of the vast reserves they've got onto line to be delivering into homes and factories and such forth by that time, but if it isn't developed now, particularly since they're having to reach further and further into the tundra of Siberia, that they won't be able to--and we made a provision for what we think they can get online between now and then--but they aren't going to have a quantum step upward as much as we believe their production of their existing oil fields is going to go down.

Q: Are you getting any help from Congress in getting enforceable security agreements so that some of these heroes like Ellsberg, Agee, Marchetti can be put in the cooler?

A: Well, let me say that when I criticize Mr. Ellsberg and all, I don't want to pass judgment on what he did at a difficult time in our country's history. All I'm saying is that we cannot today continue to make heroes as the press did of Mr. Snepp, in my opinion, who violated firm agreement with this Agency in writing and an express agreement with me in my office here last May--that he would at least let us look at the book, not to censor it but to say that this was classified or that was classified and so if necessary. The Congress does have some provisions in the draft legislation to put teeth into that but as I say, it will come out on the street tomorrow maybe for the first time in its very preliminary form. What form it will take when finally enacted is difficult to predict. I realize there is a real problem here, related of course to the First Amendment of the Constitution. The law is such today that if it's a crime to release classified information then a newspaper man who got that classified information from an

informer would be forced to disclose his informer because he was otherwise withholding information related to a criminal prosecution. All of us want to preserve the independents of the media of our country in accordance with the Constitution. There are provisions being made or drafts being made to work around that so that it will not infringe on the press. The question is can that be done constitutionally, can it be done legally, can it be done in a way that will satisfy the people that we're not going to lose more than we gain in the process. I hope so, but it will take another number of months before we'll know.

Q: I would like to follow that question. It appears that whistle blowing is becoming almost a recognized profession among employees of some government agencies. Certainly with the article in yesterday's New York Post about an anonymous \$10,000 award for a whistle blower from one federal agency and the AAAS having a whole day's session on whistle blowing as it affected two federal agencies and its meeting here in Washington this month. May stealing, more externalizing of dissent, that is not adequately heard and dealt with within the Agency. You pointed to two cases here--Snepp and Ellsberg--what have you done to try to bring out the dissenters within CIA and hear them and view them, so that you have an opportunity to see if you can listen to them and change a situation they perceive as bad so that you don't get the.....

A: Good point. I've done I think four things. One is I've repeatedly published a policy that any employee may communicate with me directly, personally--put it in a envelope and marks it personal and it gets to me unopened. Secondly, I have never turned down an employee who has asked to come see me, personally, with a personal complaint or a complaint about the whole organization or whatever it may be. Thirdly, I try to meet weekly with some group of a dozen or 15 non-top level people. We select different groups from different areas: a group representing the secretaries, a group representing the GS-13 in this section, a group representing the handicapped, a group representing whatever else. My schedule doesn't always permit it but I've been fairly consistent in doing that. And fourthly, I've instituted a form of communication between the Director and the organization by what I call the Director's Notes which goes up on the bulletin board and are distributed--not only the bulletin board only but they go to every employee in his office, periodically to let them know what's going on from my point of view and try, if I know there are problems that can be solved in part by letting them know what's happening as opposed to just having to go out

and do something different, to get that word out to them. Those are the principle ways I've approached the problem and it is more important to be able to sense to get a feedback from what people are thinking. It is essential and it's very difficult in a fairly large organization to keep from getting isolated up there in my 7th floor office. Those are a few small efforts I've made to get in touch. I get some really - I don't get to many complaints necessarily in these personal communications - but I get some darn good suggestions. And I like to take those and put them in my own words and staff them around and see if they can be done. I put them in my own words to protect the individual who suggested it. If they've come to me privately I try to keep it private. If they come to me and sign their name or put it in an open envelope why I'll just send it down to the staff and work it over and see if we can do it.

Q: The eye in the Central Intelligence Agency stands for intelligence. I think most people recognize the need for this country to gather intelligence about what's going on in other countries. However a good proportion of the criticism in the CIA in recent years has been to use your term "shaping" in other countries. In the oversight roles of the various groups you've been describing is there really a push to keep you away from that role and just make you an intelligence gathering agency?

A: No, the country still believes and I firmly still believe that we need to have the capability to do political action or in the intelligence jargon, covert action. Covert action is influencing events in another country without it being apparent who's doing the influencing. And as I give you examples as where it's been attempted sometimes successfully, sometimes unsuccessfully and today we are retaining that capability, today we are doing covert action. It's very limited and on the scale it was 10 years ago it is miniscule today and if I told you the details of the covert actions we're doing you would sigh and say that wouldn't make a good James Bond story if they wrote it up. But the time could come when it would be very important to do something of much greater significance than what we're doing today. We must retain that capability. But in the oversight process today, if we are going to do what's called a covert action, which is not collecting intelligence, I must get the approval

of the National Security Council, the signature of the President and then notify eight committees of the Congress and if you don't think that inhibits me from running off like a wild sheep who--. So it is under very tight control and that's the law that the Congress must be notified that's already on the books. So if we do a covert action anywhere in the world without going through this process, I could go to jail. I can assure you that's not my idea of how to end up my career.

Q: You were talking about technical means in intelligence gathering and from what I've been reading in the papers of lately it seems like we might be vulnerable because of our reliance on some of these means. I guess you read about getting a lot of information from photographic satellites and we also read about Russian capabilities for shooting down these satellites. Is this something to worry about? What are we doing about this?

A: There is no form of collecting intelligence that can't be countered. It's a constant contest of ploy and counter-ploy, measure and counter-measure and yes, I confirmed a few weeks ago in the media, something Secretary Brown said a few months ago, that the Russians do have a capability today to shoot down some satellites. That is something to be concerned about and I can assure you we are concerned. We're trying to find the counter-measure and you constantly go back and forth in this kind of thing. But I would say that I'm not so worried that I think we're vulnerable to a dangerous degree at this point. In addition, I would say one of the reasons I contend we're number one is that we're well ahead of the Soviets in the sophisticated technical means of collecting intelligence. For some of them, they've developed a partial counter like this, others they have not. We have a wide range at our ability and we have a technological lead thanks to institutions like MIT and the products that they've produced for us over the years. So, I think that we will be able to continue a jump ahead of them.

Q: I am very pleased to hear you say that the human element is important in evaluating what the enemy might do in the future or what the enemy means by certain actions he's taken. Will you relate to us the need for your Agency for such personnel to take those evaluations in regard to the persons have been recently laid off and can't be used

in this activity?

- A: We have not laid off--I've got to phrase this carefully to be explicit--We have reduced 820 positions in the clandestine service, the human intelligence service of the United States. None of those positions--almost none of those positions--are overseas where you do the intelligence work. 810 or so of them are here in the Headquarters. The Agency has recognized for many years that it is overstaffed. We've had to shift out of the covert action in addition. It finally came time where I felt we had to bite that bullet. I think the reduction of these overhead positions in the Headquarters will in fact, strengthen our ability to collect intelligence overseas. I don't know how all of you feel in your business or your government offices, but the thing that I find very inhibiting in my life is when I've got too many people telling me what to do. That's the situation we've been in, we've had 820 people more than we needed sitting here in this complex telling the people out in the field how to do their business. That does not promote what we need which is good, lean, clear intelligence collection.
- Q: The policy conclusions without releasing sources is really fraught with a danger of political views. An alternative would be to separate overt and covert intelligence and have an organization which published....reports and sources and everything that comes from open literature are things that are widely available and have the Intelligence agencies basically advise the National Command authorities along differences where covert action, says things available in the open literature is misleading, and that would allow us to examine the sources of the data and make our own judgments without veracity. What disadvantages do you see with this?
- A: It could be very costly in terms of another whole structure because the people who do the covert analysis or the analysis of covertly collected information also review all the overt information. I mean that's a very important source of intelligence for us. You would have to have one team that did covert/overt and another that did just overt. I think that would be duplicatory. I don't believe there is this great danger of abuse of the system by not disclosing your sources because one of the criteria for deciding not to release the report is that it would not be very meaningful to the public or it would not be very credible to the public if we didn't disclose the sources. If it is just some wild assertion--the Soviets are going to build 32 new missiles of type A--it's not worth publishing because you can't get your teeth into it. But the oil report for instance, on the Soviet Union, a lot of that came from

open sources. Their doing extensive water flooding in their oil fields and in time that leads to your pumping out more water than oil and it reduces your production - over simplified. A lot of that came from overt material. But that overt material led us to look in the secret files a little bit where we hadn't looked before and corroborate that and expand on it a little bit but that wasn't such a heavy part of the analysis as to vitiate it's usefulness if we didn't put in exactly what those secret elements were. The only other thing I can say is that there are checks on what I publish, clearly the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, with their intelligence operations are overlooking what we do here and if we put one out they don't feel is balanced, I'm going to hear about it and the public I think will be protected.

Q: Given the heavy technological components of both intelligence measures and security, it raises the whole question on how you judge capabilities. You can spot some new weapon system or something and there is always the question of what is it going to be used for. This gets back to your earlier question of explaining why something happened yesterday and what might happen tomorrow. I wonder if you could expand on the whole problem of successive attention, successive motivation trying to put the events in some kind of a context.

A: Well, one way is to try by means of human spy activity to find out what the enemy is talking and thinking about, writing about. Another is in the way you analyze the clues because sometimes on a series of clues about what went on in the past can give you a curve on projection to the future. It could change but sometimes those things really don't have a lot of flexibility for change. So it is a matter of interpretation. But clearly that is the most difficult part of intelligence, is to tell where people are going next. There's no firm rule for it but that's one of the skills that we have to try to develop, is the combination of asking ourselves what additional clue collected by a human or a technical collector would give us confirmation of what we think is the trend is going to be and you then go back out and start searching again. We've done that in a number of areas where we've had photographs available but they went back in history and you can go back and track the curve earlier than you detected it and fair it in there and see that it is smoothing out and going in some particular direction. It's a little bit vague but I'm not sure I can help you much more on that.

- Q: Admiral I noticed you at some schools on the West Coast last week I wonder if you've been tasked by the Administration to go out and act as a salesman for the new intelligence reorganization policy?
- A: No, I left last Tuesday noon and I told the President that I was leaving at 11:45. I am not a political figure as most of the Cabinet are who go out and speak for the Panama Canal Treaty and other Administration policies. But I have on my own, since last August, undertaken a program of trying to communicate more in the non-governmental environment. I spent my first 6 months trying to get my feet under the table or on the ground or something and told Herb don't you sign me up for any talks for 6 months. Six months to the day he had me out on the podium some place. I find it very valuable. I went out this last week and I spoke to two businessman's groups in Houston, Texas and I spoke to another businessman's group in San Francisco, Calif., that one was a nation-wide convention. Then I spent an afternoon and an evening on the Stanford University campus. And if you don't think, with the very conservative oil people of Huston and the very liberals students at Stanford and a cross section of businessmen in San Francisco, that I don't get a different feel for what the country is thinking about intelligence. On the other hand, I'm being pushed to do more dirty tricks and on the other hand I'm being heckled from the platform or off the platform at Stanford. It does me good and I hope it also is providing some openness, some understanding in the American public of what we are trying to accomplish and how we're trying to do it.
- Q: In speaking about the importance of intelligence today as opposed to 30 years ago, you refer to the balance of powerful militarily and economically. It seems to me that this argument also puts a greater importance on precision of your intelligence and emphasizes the importance of controlling value judgments of your individuals for assessing your intelligence so that they do not influence the assessment in an attempt to upset that balance, the way they would like it to come out. How do you control that? It's a very, very difficult balancing act.
- A: It is indeed. And we emphasize to ourselves every day that we're not in the policy-making business and we've got to stay clear of that and try to make our analyses as objective as possible. And

one of the ways to make them objective and which I constantly reiterate to our analytic people, is not to believe that you can reach up to Mount Sinai and come down with some tablets engraved with the gospel truth about the Soviet intentions when they're building their strategic forces. You've got to take the facts as you have them and say we believe this means that what they are doing is shifting their emphasis in direction A for the following reasons, but there are good arguments to mean they may be going in a different direction. Lay that out not as the gospel engraved in stone, but as your best guess that it's going in Direction A but acknowledging that it could be Direction B. And by giving the pros and cons of each, you help the man not only to make up his mind whether he thinks it's A or B, but understand why it may be A or B because the real clue that tells you which it is may not come in for three months. And then you put it together with what you've understood from this rather than a simple statement they're going in Direction A. I think that's the only way, or one of the only ways I know, to try to prevent this biasing, to make the analyst undercover the shortcomings of his own analysis as well as the point that he made be unintentionally perhaps trying to drive to.

Q: This is sort of an expansion on the last question. You made a point in your talk that one of the changes in the Intelligence Community is that you're working the various aspects of the Community together into a more integrated and smoothly functioning machine. I understand one of the aspects of the Executive Order is that you as head of the Central Intelligence function pass on the budget of the various different communities in the intelligence community. Now in the past there's been a fair amount of publicity about disagreements in intelligence evaluation between different parts of the Intelligence Community. It seems to me that one of the clear dangers in making it a more smoothly functioning inter-knit organization, particularly from the captain of one of the subgroups, Central Intelligence organization, also sits on the budget of all of the other subgroups, and that must be the key choke point, is to produce a certain conformity of views. I'm sure you don't intend that but institutional tendencies dominate in the long run. What built in institutional checks have you done to prevent a conformity of opinion over the long run?

A: What are the checks built in to prevent a conformitive opinion as a result of my authority to control the budgets of the various intelligence agencies. There are two: The first is that control isn't all that explicit. I'll come back to that. The second is what I mentioned before that there are these competing centers of analysis and I do not have authority to tell them what to analyze, how to analyze it or what their conclusions should be. Those are the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State's prerogatives and they're cabinet officers and outrank me, and if I try to suppress the quality of their analysis, the conclusions of their analysis, I'm not going to get very far because they're going to be able to take their conclusions right to the President. The analytic agencies consume the smallest part of the budget. The only way I could drive them some way would be to take all their money away and that sort of getting ludicrous because as long as they have a reasonable number of people they are going to do their own analysis which I can't control. But beyond that, the way we put the Intelligence budget together last year was by a committee of which I was the chairman, or my predecessor was the chairman. This year we have the same committee but I'm not only the chairman, I have all the votes. But the other people are still there and their views are still represented and in the bureaucracy of the United States Government there's no way one individual can run rough shod over two cabinet officers, the Office of Management and Budget, the President of the United States and the Congress. So there are all these other checks if I really do disregard an important element of someone's budget. They have the right of appeal directly to the President because they are Cabinet Member Officers. They appeal first through the Office of Management and Budget and try to get them to turn me around and eventually it all goes to debate on Capitol Hill. So it isn't as though I write the checks and that determines everybody's budget. What it does do is that a single individual listing the rational arguments can make more rational choices frequently than a committee. And I think that's what we're getting. If the choices are not sound, there are lots of avenues for appeal.

Q: I was wondering if you feel you could be more effective in the Central Intelligence function if it were a Cabinet position?

A: No, I'm not of the opinion that rank makes all that much difference. There are too many people in the government who feel you've got to be a GS something or other in order to talk with a GS something or other, or a colonel to talk with a Lt. Colonel. My feeling is that I have an Executive Order signed by the President. I have certain statutes signed by the Congress that give me the authority to do what I do and the impediments are not that I'm a grade 2 and the Secretary of Defense is a grade 1. It doesn't bother me. I happened to have spent most of my military life about one rank below where I belonged and I always fought and argued just as hard with my superior--with the fellow who was my equal--rank superior is what I mean. Equal in assignment regardless, because I just feel that if you stand cowed by rank and let your organization suffer as a result thereby you are not doing justice to the people who are working for you. So I'm willing to stand up and fight from wherever I am for whatever I think is right.

Q: What extent, if any, is there a sharing of information with other foreign intelligence agencies?

A: Well there's quite a bit of sharing with other foreign intelligence agencies. It depends on the country. We're closest with the NATO countries, the countries we are closely allied with. But there are many, many free world countries with which we have levels of collaboration and coordination, and it's of course, very valuable to us. Intelligence is an expensive business and to the degree that we can benefit by what other people are doing and not have to replicate it ourselves we benefit. There are obviously some things other countries can do much better than we and yet, interestingly, I would say to you that the world of intelligence has changed as a result of this technical revolution I mentioned and there really are only two countries in the world which can have class intelligence organizations because these first technical systems are so big, so expensive overall that even our principle NATO allies cannot afford the panoply of technical collection equipments that we do and the Soviets do and therefore, we're just generically different. In World War II, I suspect British may have been as good or better than ours. Today it's superb in the areas that it can cover, but it hasn't got the money for the technical base to do all the things that we can do. So there's a key example where we do share because they still have tremendous expertise that we don't in limited areas. For us to go out and spend the money to have that when we are very cooperative with them I think would be unwise. We're trying to have a combination for you of efficiency so we don't waste resources. These programs are

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effectiveness, so we do say number one, and at the same time controls that will ensure that we are not abusing the very delicate trust that has been given to us.

Thanks for being with us tonight.

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8 FEB 1978

Jargon -- blow cover

Had mine blown twice

What takes -- good intell. demo soc

Almost 3 years -- intell. in media only when being criticized

Turned corner -- constructive debate

Excited -- beginning move in new era Am Intell.

Assure: (1) Can have effective intell. adhering stand -- protect rts.

(2) Also assure you that won't usher in new era w/o charges,  
controversy, some bureaucratic adjustments

Let suggest adjust like family business

30 years -- incorporate

Believe this was ADM Turner's outline for his speech to the MIT Club  
in Auditorium, 8 February 1978. dmg

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Director Turner's address  
to the  
MIT Club of Washington

w/questions & answers

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